

Child-Centered Reading Conference Strategies

by Carolyn Wilhelm

| Reading Strategy | Teacher Talk Suggestions |
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| Predicting | I'm so happy you finally were able to get your hands on this book, I know you have been waiting for it! Make a note of what you are expecting from this book right now, so you we can discuss it when you are done reading. |
| Background knowledge (text-to-self) | It sounds like you are thinking about how this story relates to your own life. Why don't you use these post-its on the pages that are making you respond that way when you are aware of them today? Please pick out one example and mark it while I'm still here, so I can let you get back to your great reading. We can think of a way to make your thinking permanent and visible later on. Great job! |
| Making mental images or visualization | Oh, it almost sounds like you are seeing a movie in your brain while you are reading this story. Good job visualizing the text. I would like you to make a few "doodles" and add page numbers to this piece of scrap paper so that later we can talk about the emotions you were feeling as you read. Let's do one together now, so I can let you get back to watching the movie, I mean reading that wonderful book. |
| Text-to-text connections | Today it sounds like you are relating this text to the book you were reading last week so why don't you stop at the end of this chapter and make a few notes on a Venn diagram that you could finish another day? It sounds like you are really thinking while you compare and contrast. Very good reading and thinking! |

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| Asking questions | You are full of questions about this story. Do you think the author intended for you as a reader to wonder about those things, or do you think the answers are there if you read more closely? I think you are right (either way, if true). Why don't you write down 5 questions before the end of chapter seven (for instance) so we can talk about if you found the answers or if you think you may wonder for a long time about this book. Do you like books that make you wonder? That's great. So, write down your questions on these index cards so we can have a discussion when you are ready. We can add them to your wonder box! |
| Determining importance | Oh, you are reading more non-fiction, you really like that, don't you? I'm glad to see you are noticing the non-fiction conventions. Do you think they help you as a reader? Which conventions do you like best? Tell me two things that seem really important to know from the pages you just finished reading. How do you know they are something to pay attention to and not less important to the subject area? You can add something about this book to your non-fiction conventions notebook. Great work. |
| Inferring | It sounds like you are having a conversation with the author today! Inferring is "the author plus you" and I think you are figuring out why the author has written certain words. You know you have to draw conclusions and make your own unique interpretation as you try to find the solution to the problem in the story. You are thinking hard, I can tell. How did you figure out (what the child said at first)? Why don't you make a note of it so next time there is a tricky part you can go back and see that, yes, you can understand what the author means and not just read the words on the paper? Excellent! |

Synthesis

Wow, thinking while reading like what you just said, doesn't happen all the time. Did you just figure that out, even with everything that is going on in the classroom? Do you know even adults have to think for awhile to realize things like that? You are using metacognition as you read and are aware that your thinking is changing as you get further into the text. Really good work. Put a post-it with a star in the places in the book where that happens in your thinking, and let's look over the trail of post-its together when you finish. Wonderful!